Increase in malnourished children

†2246. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of malnourished children is day by day on the increase in the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that former Chief Food Officer of United Nations has made known that around 10 crore children in the country are malnourished; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) No, Sir. The National Family Health Survey series reveal that the percentage of underweight children under three years has decreased from 52% in 1992-93 to 46% in 2005-06.

(b) and (c) The Government is not in receipt of any such reference from the Chief Food Officer of United Nations.

Application of labour laws on anganwadi workers

2247. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether labour laws are applicable on Anganwadi workers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) if so, the details of their job description, working hours, wages, leave, age of retirement, benefits on retirement, etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) to (c) The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme envisages Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) to be honorary workers from the local community. On receipt of an application as prescribed, it is for the Competent Authority, under the relevant labour law, to take a view whether the provisions of such laws are applicable to the AWWs or not.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.